



The Literature of Equitation

ONE MAN'S OPINION

*for L.H. review
see pages 9-13*



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ONE MAN'S OPINION

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From the time when the U.S.P.C. was organized, its officers have appreciated that although its various official publications furnish very effectively most of the material needed for the basic instruction of our children, any pony clubber who wishes to carry his education further must supplement this basic material by reading also some of the classic books dealing with riding and training. And so we all agree on the advice: read books on equitation. The inevitable response to this advice is, of course, "*What books?*" And there's the rub!

The very wealth of available material makes selection difficult. Even among the books which may fairly be classified as good or even excellent, we find authors approaching their subject with very different goals in mind, or with an emphasis on different methods or different techniques of riding or instruction. It is obvious that the age, the knowledge and the experience of the prospective reader are all of importance in selecting books which he will find useful. As a perhaps extreme example, Waldemar Seunig, in his scholarly book, "*Horsemanship*", says that he "is concerned only with those for whom association with the horse is a vital necessity and the content of their lives". It would be a rare pony club child who would find much practical assistance in a book written for such a select group of readers.

At this point you may ask "Why doesn't the U.S.P.C. prepare a short list of books which are suitable for pony clubs and leave it at that?" Primarily for two reasons. A mere list of books without any explanation of what each book has to offer, and where each book belongs in broad spectrum of books on equitation would be merely offering the choice of a pig in a poke. Perhaps even more serious is the fact that if ten competent horsemen were each asked to list his ten favorite books, I doubt whether any two would come up with the same or perhaps even closely similar lists. Naturally, each member of our "selection committee" would feel that the list should include his favorite books, so our short list would inevitably become quite a long one. But are these difficulties so serious that we should abandon any effort to be helpful? It was because of this situation that, as a member of the Advisory Committee of the U.S.P.C., I was asked to write this pamphlet.

Before suggesting specific books, it may be helpful to describe briefly the development of equitation as we know it today and to tell of some of the classic books which are the background and indeed the foundation of our modern literature of equitation. I shall then describe

and attempt to relate to each other the books which in my personal opinion are most likely to be useful to pony club readers. In doing this, I will, for the most part, be summarizing with some updating but in extremely abbreviated form, portions of a book which I wrote a few years ago and which was published by J. A. Allen & Co. of London, England, under the title, "*Masters of Equitation*". I recommend "*Masters of Equitation*" to those of you who may be interested in a more complete description of the development of equitation and of its literature.

If we define equitation as the science or art of riding and of training a horse to be ridden (rather than driven as in a chariot), the earliest books on equitation presently extant are two short books written in Greece in the fourth century B.C. by Xenophon, known to all who have studied the classic Greek language for his "*Anabasis*". Translated into many languages, Xenophon's books have been published and republished again and again over the twenty-four intervening centuries. The most recent English edition is a republication in London in 1962 of the translation by Professor Morgan of Harvard which was first published in Boston in 1894. Xenophon's understanding of the proper approach to the training and riding of a horse was so enlightened that again and again he is quoted with approval and is well worth reading twenty-three centuries later.

After Xenophon, nineteen centuries elapse before we again find any book on equitation. Much happened during this period. Saddles, stirrups and horseshoes had been discovered and came into general use. New breeds of horses had developed, notably the great horse and the Arab. But the development had not been all good. Force and cruelty had replaced the enlightened and understanding approach of the Greek horsemen as described by Xenophon. This brutal approach is clearly reflected in "*Hippiatrica Sive Marescalia*" by Laurentius Rusius, produced in manuscript about the middle of the fifteenth century and so highly regarded that it was thereafter printed and reprinted for a period of over two hundred years. For us today, the significance of this book is that it so clearly portrays the low level from which classic horsemanship was to develop during the succeeding four hundred years.

The classic techniques of riding and schooling are generally considered as starting with the Neapolitan School, which had its beginnings in and around Naples about the middle of the sixteenth century. The first of the great Italian horsemen of this period was Frederic Grisoni whose book, "*L'Écurie de Sieur Grison*", was published about 1550. He was followed by Cesar Fiaschi of Ferrara whose famous pupil Pignatelli was probably the outstanding horseman of the period. At this time, and against the background of the Italian Renaissance, we first find emphasis on the use of the leg, circles at walk, trot and canter, the slow collected canter, and apparently the beginning of the high school airs.

The scene soon shifts from Italy to France. The teachings of the Neapolitan School were brought to France primarily by de la Broue and by de Pluvinel, both of whom had studied with Pignatelli in Italy. "*Le Cavalerice François*" by de la Broue is the first book on equitation by a French writer and is notable because of the author's insistence that training should start with a "bridon" or snaffle bit, and because of his development of direct flexions. Pluvinel is best known for his two books, "*L'Exercice de Monter à Cheval*" and "*L'Instruction du Roi*", the latter being generally recognized as the first truly great French book on equitation. For us it is of special value because its illustrations portray with fashion-plate accuracy not only the horses and their riders, but what is probably an idealized version of the accepted riding technique of the period.

The next outstanding French Master was De la Guerinière, considered by many to be the greatest horseman of all time. To him we owe shoulder in, counter gallop, and flying changes of lead. His "*École de Cavalerie*" published in 1733 is still considered a standard book. Colonel Podhajsky credits to Guerinière methods followed today by the Spanish Riding School.

The development of classical riding continued an almost uninterrupted progress for another two centuries, not only in France but elsewhere throughout Europe. For our present purpose, the details are not too important, or even the names of the distinguished horsemen whose work and whose writings contributed to classical horsemanship as it was practised at the beginning of this century. What is important is that during this period a wealth of knowledge was being built up, step by step, which forms the foundation and the background of equitation as we know it today. It is to the literature of this period as well as to books of the present day that our truly great horsemen still turn for assistance in solving their more troublesome problems of riding and training. Steinkraus puts it extremely well when he says,

"It is ironic that so many of the people who have never studied the literature of riding . . . simply 'can't spare the time' to do so. That they should cherish time is reasonable enough, for after all, time is life; but the only way in which we can truly save time lies in borrowing from the experience (which is to say, the time) of others. Nothing is more wasteful than the tedious search for a solution to a problem which others have long since solved."

The quotation is from the preface written by Steinkraus for d'Endrödy's "*Give Your Horse a Chance*", a scholarly book, but unfortunately rather too difficult reading for most pony clubbers.

At this point, you may perhaps be wondering whether I am about to recommend reading Pluvinel or Guerinière, or even Newcastle or Baucher or Fillis. No, I shall not recommend for pony club use these grand old masters "whose distant footsteps echo through the corridors of

time", though I shall not be disappointed if some day curiosity should tempt some of you to have at least a look. It is enough, for now, that we should realize that our present-day literature of riding is part and parcel of a tapestry which was started long years ago and is still being woven year by year. There are many ways of riding and training horses. It would be a grave mistake to think that everything that there is to know about riding and training is of recent origin or is to be found in any one book or even in all of the books written by any one author. It is an equally serious but all-too-common mistake to conclude that because a book suggests methods other than those which the reader prefers or with which he is familiar, the book is not useful. Accordingly, if the choice is to be an intelligent one, we must select our books with at least some understanding of where they fit in this great tapestry. To this end, I suggest that we next establish a further "frame of reference" by considering why, during the present century, and more particularly during the past thirty years, more books on equitation have been published here and in England than in any earlier period.

Up to approximately the start of this century, sophisticated riding, and particularly the classic riding whose development I have briefly described, was directed almost solely toward school riding — the riding of a highly collected horse in an enclosed area. While some of the French masters were advocating a different approach to outdoor riding (equitation d'extérieur), they had not developed anything resembling cross-country riding as we know it today. In England, the interest was indeed centered on outdoor riding, including riding to hounds. Mounted on the best horses in the world, and often riding with great courage and athletic ability, the British horsemen of that period had also failed to develop what would today be considered sound methods of riding or schooling for cross-country riding. But equitation was on the verge of a new era. Show jumping was about to start its rapid rise in popularity. Competitive jumping was destined to demonstrate the inadequacy for this purpose of nineteenth century equitation. With the faster pace of the twentieth century, interest in the faster-moving, cross-country horse was to supersede to an ever-increasing extent interest in the slower collected movements of the school rider. The stage was set. The man who was destined to start the revolution was an Italian — Federico Caprilli.

"Il Sistema", as Caprilli himself referred to the methods which he developed, is based on the substitution of free forward movement with a minimum of restraint for the controlled movements of the school rider. At first, horsemen using this new method used a seat only moderately different from the classical seat of the school rider. However, it very soon became apparent that free forward movement without disturbing the natural balance of the horse could only be achieved if the rider took a much more forward position, or, as we would express it today, rode with rather than behind the horse. With this forward seat, the weight was

carried more or less over the horse's own center of balance, thus achieving a minimum of interference with the natural balance of the horse. Because this radically new position of the rider was so obviously different from any other seat then in use, it was very promptly labeled the Italian Seat, and then later, the Forward Seat. The seat thus became the distinguishing mark of Caprilli's new system. However, it should not be overlooked that the essence of Caprilli's new system was free forward movement and that the seat was only a part of the method by which he was seeking to attain this objective.

Caprilli thought of his system as a new method of riding cross-country. Riding forward over jumps was a part of the system, but only a part. However, the system first demonstrated its outstanding superiority when applied to show jumping, and particularly to international military competition during the period just prior to the First World War. With the war, everything came to a halt, but in the early 'twenties, with the war over, military riders from all over the world flocked to Italy to take advantage of the extraordinary willingness of the Italian Cavalry Schools to demonstrate and teach Caprilli's methods to qualified military riders from other countries. Over a period of several years, nine United States Army officers studied at the Italian Cavalry schools either at Pinerolo or at Tor di Quinto, or at both. The most famous of these was Harry D. Chamberlin, whose rewriting of the U. S. Cavalry Manual and whose own two published books were soon to exert a profound influence on riding methods and techniques, especially in the United States.

The new methods introduced by Caprilli and very soon followed, though with some or perhaps with substantial modification, by military riders throughout the world were not accepted readily by most civilian riders. It was not easy to give up long accepted methods. The most common term of contempt for these new methods was a reference to a "monkey on a stick". It was the often stated belief of the more conservative horsemen that any rider using the new methods would inevitably be catapulted over his horse's head if the horse hit a jump hard, pecked on landing, or sharply refused. But in due course the new ideas found their place.

The importance of this, from our standpoint, is that it is fair to say that scarcely a book on equitation has been written during the past forty years which has not been affected to a greater or lesser extent by this background: first, the great wealth of knowledge and experience from the classical period, then the introduction of the radical new methods of cross-country riding and jumping, and finally the period of change during which, often with great reluctance, the new ideas achieved acceptance. Does this include even books on "*Dressage*"? My own answer is yes, but I will not stop to argue the point, since for pony club use we are more concerned with books on general or cross-country riding.

The first outpouring of books on equitation written in English after the end of World War I came primarily from British writers who were in varying degrees aware of the new ideas, and who, for the most part, were seeking to reconcile these new ideas with previously accepted methods. Although this period of transition is historically of importance, the books which it produced present methods which often are confusing and sometimes incongruous. Of the British authors of the period, the most significant is Lt. Colonel McTaggart, whose principal book was "*Mount and Man*", first published in 1925. He also wrote "*From Colonel to Subaltern*", republished as "*Two Horsemen and Mabel*". And the one book by McTaggart which is still sometimes recommended for junior riders is his "*Horsemanship for Boys and Girls*". In advocating in general Caprilli's methods, for which at times he seems to take joint credit, McTaggart attacked with great vigor what he regarded as the shortcomings of contemporary British horsemanship. To most horsemen of his generation, McTaggart's ideas and the books in which he presented them were nothing short of heresy. And so it is that when, only a generation later, Brigadier Bolton, himself a distinguished horseman and writer, referred to McTaggart as an author not to be disregarded, he added the priceless comment that, "He, like the Christian martyrs, lived before his time." Judged by present-day standards, McTaggart, in advocating a new approach, was still hanging onto other inconsistent ideas carried over from his early training. However, he definitely marks the turning point in British equitation, and from that standpoint, is important.

Lt. Colonel Geoffrey Brooke's "*Horse Sense and Horsemanship of Today*" (a revised and expanded version of his earlier book, "*Training Young Horses to Jump*"), is of interest because of the obvious reluctance with which the author accepts in part the teachings of the Italian school, adds French principles of schooling, and then mixes in British ideas brought forward from his own early training. As Chief Instructor of the British Cavalry School at Weedon, Brooke was valiantly moving in the right direction, but there was still a long way to go.

Captain J. E. Hance's "*School for Horse and Rider*" (1932) marks a further step forward. In speaking of the Forward Seat, Hance says that he accepts it "as a means to an end". If we take this statement at its face value, it would appear to be pure Caprilli, for clearly *Il Sistema* used the forward seat as an important means in securing free forward movement. But when Hance explains the end which he has in mind, it seems that he regards his version of the forward seat merely as a temporary device to assist the novice rider in staying with his horse while learning to jump. Accordingly, we must conclude that Hance had definitely not accepted or perhaps even fully understood *Il Sistema*. However, when he describes the use and effect of school figures in training a horse for hunting or jumping, he clearly indicates acceptance of at least some of the modern methods of schooling. There were of course other signifi-

cant books written by British authors during this period, but this all too brief description of McTaggart, Brooke and Hance will perhaps suggest the transition which was in progress.

Except for some brief notes written about 1901 under the title, "*Principi di Equitazione di Campagna*", eventually translated and published in 1951 in the British magazine, "*Light Horse*", Caprilli has left us no written explanation of "*Il Sistema*". Perhaps the best explanation of his method is to be found in the books of his pupil, associate and disciple, Major Piero Santini. The important books by Santini are: "*Riding Reflections*" (1932), "*The Forward Impulse*" (1936), and "*The Riding Instructor*" (1952). All three are worth reading as the best available explanation of Caprilli's teaching. However, I must admit that I am never quite sure how much is actually Caprilli and how much is The Gospel according to Santini.

Harry D. Chamberlin studied the Italian system at Tor di Quinto in 1923. He had also studied at the French Cavalry School at Saumur and was thoroughly familiar with the principles and methods of the French classical school. Convinced as he soon was of the basic soundness of the Italian system for training and riding hunters and jumpers, he was not prepared to discard altogether the classical methods of schooling which had been so carefully developed for so many years. His use of school methods and school figures for the purpose of producing a more supple, athletic and responsive horse, in combination with what is basically the Italian system of riding, was employed with great success by our military show jumping teams starting in the late 1920's. The methods are well described in two books. The more elementary book is "*Riding and Schooling Horses*". The more advanced book is "*Training Hunters, Jumpers and Hacks*", which includes also an excellent discussion of conformation and a very useful description of injuries and their treatment. Although first published some thirty years ago, modern editions of both books are still available and are strongly recommended. They are a must for anyone who wishes to have in his library even a modest collection of the modern books on equitation.

I come now to the three "modern" authors whose books written (with one exception) during the past twenty years I consider particularly useful to most pony club members and to their instructors. They are Littauer, Wynmalen and Benoist-Gironière.

Captain Littauer was born in Russia at the end of the last century and received his early training in the Russian Army. He came to the United States following the revolution, and was one of the earliest and most ardent advocates of the forward seat. However, like Chamberlin, he soon recognized that the use of the forward seat and "forward schooling" could be combined successfully with the use of many of the schooling figures of classic equitation, but, he felt, to better advantage in

a larger area and with greater freedom of movement. He departs also from the strict Italian system by advocating the development of that limited and intermittent or temporary collection which he describes as natural or semi-collection. To use his own words, he, like Chamberlin, "aims at making a hunter or jumper a well-balanced horse, a good mover, a good jumper, and a pleasant, strong, agile cooperative horse to ride". He seeks to accomplish this by making the horse a better athlete, by developing calmness and relaxation, and by developing responsiveness to the rider's commands or requests. Of Littauer's many books, the ones which I suggest for pony club use are his exhaustive and easily understood "*Commonsense Horsemanship*", published in 1951, and his much shorter book directed primarily to the training of the horse, entitled "*Schooling Your Horse*", published in 1956. His earlier book, "*Be a Better Horseman*", published in 1941, is also good and is outstanding for its excellent illustrations.

Henry Wynmalen was by profession a brilliant and successful engineer and by avocation a distinguished amateur horseman. He was for a number of years England's leading dressage rider, and is therefore commonly thought of primarily in connection with his interest in advanced dressage riding. However, his earlier years were devoted actively to cross-country riding and show jumping, and for a number of years he was M.F.H. of the Woodland Hunt. Though an early advocate of the Italian seat, he, like Chamberlin and Littauer, was unwilling to give up the methods of schooling so carefully developed by the riders of the classical school. His first important book, "*Equitation*", published in London in 1938, though carrying through into advanced training, is a basic book on riding and schooling, and deals very competently with jumping. Beautifully written, Wynmalen has managed to cover in a mere one hundred and forty pages the essentials of riding and schooling. It is a book eminently suited for pony club use. After publishing in 1950 "*Horse Breeding and Stud Management*", which reflects his knowledge and experience as a breeder, Wynmalen returned to training and schooling with the publication of "*Dressage*" in 1953. While this book contains a fascinating explanation of the more advanced dressage movements, it deals to a major extent with methods and with a philosophy of schooling which are as useful to the rider who seeks only a well-schooled hunter as to the rider who aspires to the airs of haute école. It is especially recommended to riders interested in the training of the young horse.

The third author whom I particularly recommend is Yves Benoist-Gironière. His background as a horseman includes four years at Saumur as a member of the French international show jumping team where he came under the influence of such outstanding figures in French equitation as Colonel Danloux, General de Vernejoul, and General Decarpentry. In his military career he served as a Spahi officer. He is an able artist whose drawings and sketches are an important and attractive part of his

books. His first book, "*Conquête du Cheval*", was translated into English and published in London in 1952. It is of special interest because in addition to giving very clearly his own views, the author quotes freely from other modern French writers, and in so doing, reflects their ideas and conclusions. His later books, "*Concours Hippique*", and "*Epitres aux Amateurs d'Obstacles*", though highly recommended, have not as yet been translated into English. His charming book of sketches, "*À Cheval Ma Mie*", with subtitles translated into English by Pat Smythe, has real educational value and is an ideal gift book for any rider.

Having selected three authors — one writing in the United States, one in England, and one in France — how should we relate them to each other? Littauer is above all the skilled instructor who has taught thousands of pupils — good, bad and indifferent — and who is particularly aware of the limitations with which an instructor is confronted. He realizes that lack of time or of physical ability or often the wrong temperament will effectually prevent most of his pupils from ever becoming expert horsemen. But he also realizes that it is not necessary that all of us should become experts. It is important that every rider should ride safely and securely, should be united with and have control of his horse, and, last but not the least, should avoid the abuse of the horse which the unskilled rider unintentionally but inevitably inflicts on his mount. He presents methods of training for horse and rider which should help even the indifferent pupil to attain these minimum standards, and should permit the pupil of average ability to attain quite readily a degree of skill adequate for satisfactory participation in the cross-country riding, hunting and jumping which is the goal of most of today's riders. Littauer does not stop there. He points the way to expert horsemanship for those who can attain it. But, basically, he is a teacher writing primarily for the many rather than the few.

I have no doubt that Wynmalen was also quite well aware of the limitations of the average rider. Most certainly he knew that however clearly he may have defined the path that leads to advanced schooling, there are few who will have the skill, the time and the inclination to follow that path to its ultimate end. But Wynmalen believed that the methods to be employed were precisely the same at the most elementary level of schooling as at the most advanced stage of training. He considers that the difference is of degree and not of kind. He accordingly seeks to present a philosophy of training which each rider may employ at whatever level he is working.

The point on which Littauer and Wynmalen would find themselves in disagreement is the extent to which advanced schooling may be carried without adversely affecting the ability of the horse to handle himself at extended gaits across country and over obstacles. Littauer believes that we may go no further than what he calls semi-collection, the tempo-

rary attitudes of collection which a well-schooled horse will assume quite readily, for example, during the transition from a faster to a slower gait. Wynmalen believed that a horse should be taught extension, should be ridden freely through natural country, and by preference should be hunted before being taught collection beyond more or less the stage which Littauer calls semi-collection. He believed in then teaching collection, but with work at extended gaits alternated with work at collection so that the horse never loses the ability to extend. He believed that collection so taught and used is no impediment, but rather a valuable part of the training of a horse even for hunting and jumping. In accordance with his views, he himself hunted regularly horses which had progressed a long way in advanced dressage. However, he would undoubtedly be the first to agree that these are methods which can only be used successfully by the expert horseman.

Like Littauer, Benoist-Gironière approaches his subject from the viewpoint of the teacher, but with this difference — that in contrast to Littauer's effort to provide an approach that will be useful even to the pupil with limited time and ability, Benoist-Gironière is obviously thinking in terms of the more gifted rider and trainer, perhaps especially such riders as were his associates during the years when he was actively competing in international jumping. He starts by pointing out that "Certainly, anybody can ride a horse", but he immediately goes on to point out that "Naturally, to become a really expert horseman is another story; to excel in this sport, as in everything else, a special gift is necessary, which practice will perfect but cannot create". This is not to say that his writings are useful only to those who are fortunate enough to possess this 'special gift', but it is the gifted ones who are closest to the author's heart. It is natural, therefore, that he follows the sophisticated approach, which is admirably indicated by the quotation from Descartes which he has used as a foreword to *"Conquest of the Horse"*, namely:

"Indeed, I would beg my readers in no wise to put faith in what they may find here, but only to consider it and to accept so much as the power and evidence of reason may constrain them to believe."

Of most importance are not the points as to which Littauer, Benoist-Gironière and Wynmalen would disagree but rather the many points on which basically they are in agreement, though sometimes expressing their ideas with quite different words. For example, they, and especially Littauer and Wynmalen, start with the belief that a horse's schooling must be based on reward and not on punishment; they proceed along similar lines in producing a supple, relaxed and responsive horse; they start schooling for jumping in the same manner; and they seek to develop along the same general lines a horse that combines courage with calmness, supple athletic power and a ready willingness to respond to light control. They are in agreement that riding and schooling go hand in hand, that no person is a good rider unless his riding is such that he

consistently improves the horses he rides. I suggest that Littauer, Wynmalen, and Benoist-Gironière can be read together to distinct advantage; that each supplements the others, and that, excepting Wynmalen's special interest in the more advanced phases of schooling, they are for the most part proceeding to similar destinations by closely parallel routes.

At this point I want to repeat with emphasis my earlier recommendation of Chamberlin and, especially, his more advanced book, "*Training Hunters, Jumpers and Hacks*". However, though I hold him in the highest regard, I suggest that his books be read in addition to and not in substitution for the recommended books by Littauer and by Wynmalen, primarily because I believe most readers would find Littauer's simpler and more extensive explanations and Wynmalen's exceptional clarity of expression easier to assimilate than Chamberlin's books, excellent though they are.

If, at this point, you are prepared to accept the books which I have suggested as being particularly suitable for pony club use, I am not myself content to leave the matter there without discussing some other important contemporary books on riding. Also, I am well aware that many of you who have had at least some contact with books on riding may at this point be saying, "Why, he hasn't even mentioned my favorite books", or perhaps with more vehemence you are saying, "Doesn't he even know that there are methods of riding and training quite different from those advocated by the authors whom he recommends?"

A definitely different approach is that practised, advocated, and taught by teachers and writers of the German school. Their approach generally involves a somewhat different seat with the balance of the rider more central than forward, a different use of the back and seat, and stronger and more constant use of the legs to drive the horse more strongly into the rider's hands. In many respects it makes greater use of classical equitation, including the continued use of methods which date back to de la Guerinière. Using these methods, German riders have achieved great success in Dressage and in jumping at the Prix de Nations level. Applied to jumping, their methods seem to be especially adapted to the heavy horses such as the Hanoverians which are used to a large extent by German riders in international competition. The German method is taught with success by many competent instructors. Personally, I happen to feel that these methods not only are more difficult for most riders to master, but also that they are less suitable for training and riding a free-going, cross-country horse, which is the goal of most of our pony club children. But even if you agree, that is no reason that we should not have a respectful understanding of the German approach.

The book most commonly recommended by the advocates of the German method is Museler's "*Reitlehre*", which in its English edition carries the title of "*Riding Logic*". It is a book which has had wide

acceptance in many different countries and by horsemen of undoubted competence. Some of it, I personally do not understand, and with some of it, I am in disagreement, but that is only my personal opinion. If you find it more helpful than I do, you will certainly be in good company.

I mentioned earlier Waldemar Seunig's excellent book "*Horsemanship*" (the English translation published in New York in 1956 and in London in 1958). It is a scholarly and comprehensive work of great value to any student of the German method. However, it was written for the rider who is not only experienced but also a devoted student. In my opinion, it is not a suitable book for most pony club students, or even for most pony club instructors.

"*Dressage Riding*" by Richard L. Wätjen, translated into English by Dr. Saloschin and first published in London in 1958, is an important book for those primarily interested in advanced dressage. With some variation in title to reflect repeated revisions, five editions had been published in Germany before the publication of the English edition.

Colonel Alois Podhajsky's "*Die Klassische Reitkunst*" very competently translated into English by Colonel V.D.S. Williams and Eva Podhajsky with the title "*The Complete Training of Horse and Rider*", although of primary interest to followers of the German school, is a book which I can enthusiastically commend to any serious student of riding. The latter part of the book deals with the advanced training of both horse and rider as practised at the Spanish Riding School, and for most of us is of academic rather than practical interest. However, the first part of the book dealing with the early schooling of both horse and rider presents an approach which any trainer will find helpful, and methods which Podhajsky himself traces in part all the way back to Xenophon.

So much for the German school. I will now comment on a few additional books which I confidently recommend to anyone who is prepared to read still more about the, to me, fascinating subject of equitation.

Dealing primarily with the subject of jumping, "*Riding and Jumping*", beautifully illustrated, and written by Bill Steinkraus in his usual easy but scholarly manner, was published in 1961 both in New York and in London. It is highly recommended.

On the same subject, "*Modern Show Jumping*" by Count Ilias Toptani (London-1954), describes some very interesting methods of developing both rider and horse. Toptani is guilty of some surprising inaccuracies when he departs from his main subject, but otherwise a good book.

Gordon Wright's ability as a teacher requires no comment. His book, "*Learning to Ride, Show and Hunt*", pictures briefly but accurately the principles of equitation which Wright had studied at Fort Riley, and which he has followed so successfully in his own instruction.

Few of our young girls will have either the opportunity or the inclination to ride side-saddle. However, from the standpoint of intellectual curiosity, some may be interested in the technique of riding side-saddle as presented by Doreen Archer Houblon, or in the history of this almost lost art as charmingly described by Lida Fleitman Bloodgood in *"The Saddle of Queens"*.

As a final suggestion, one of my special favorites which every so often I pull out and re-read is, *"Thoughts on Riding"* by Brigadier Lyndon Bolton revised and re-published in 1964 under the title *"Training the Horse"*. England's famous international rider, Pat Smythe, commends this book with the comment that "it has been my constant companion". Incidentally, Bolton is an understanding and enthusiastic advocate of pony club instruction as evidenced by his comment that, "I doubt if in these days any grown-up can be better situated to learn to ride than is a keen member of a good pony club".

I have limited my comments to some thirty more or less well-known books on riding. Obviously, there are many more. Some of you will not agree with my selection or with the opinions which I have voiced. This is not really very important. What is important is that you should have enough knowledge of the history and literature of equitation to permit you to evaluate and to select intelligently for your own use the books which you feel will provide helpful assistance in your efforts toward better horsemanship for yourself and for others. If this article assists you in so doing, it has accomplished its purpose.

To suggest a book is one thing. To tell you where to get it is another. Your local book store, even if it is a very good one, is unlikely to stock books on equitation such as I have described in this article. It can order and perhaps eventually obtain some of these books, at least those published in the United States. However, many of the best books on equitation are not that readily available. A better source in this country is SYDNEY R. SMITH SPORTING BOOKS, Canaan, New York 12029, the distributors for all Pony Club publications. In London, J. A. ALLEN & Co., 1 Lower Grosvenor Place, London S.W.1, are specialists in books on the horse and can be particularly helpful in picking up satisfactory used copies of books which are temporarily or permanently out of print. There is no problem in ordering books from Allen, as they are dispatched promptly by mail, come through free of duty, without Customs formalities, and can be paid for with your own check in dollars.

And so I leave you with the hope that you may find in the vast treasure chest which books offer, some of the assistance and some of the pleasure which I have found there over a period of many years.

